

MINUTES

TALBOT COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

2 May 2011

I. ROLL CALL

The regular monthly meeting of the Talbot County Historic Preservation Commission was called to order at 3:00 PM on Monday, 2 May 2011. Those members in attendance were Mr. Steven K. Hack, Chairperson, Mrs. Marsha Kacher, and Mr. Robert Amdur. Mr. Eric Lowery, Mr. Ward Bucher, Ms. Peggy Pickall and Ms. Alice Marie Gravely were not present. Representing the County was Mr. Martin Sokolich.

II. CURRENT BUSINESS

- A. REVIEW MINUTES OF 4 April 2011 TCHPC MEETING – The minutes of the last meeting were read. Mrs. Marsha Kacher moved to approve the minutes minutes as read. The motion was seconded by and unanimously approved.
- B. UPDATE: GRANT APPLICATION FOR RESURVEY OF EASTON HISTORIC DISTRICT – Mr. Martin Sokolich reported that he and Zach Smith, Planner for the Town of Easton, and Roger Bollman of the Easton Historic District Commission went to Washington College in Chestertown to see what Chestertown did with their grant. Mr. Bollman felt that the college's methods in surveying Chestertown were applicable to the needs of the Town of Easton. Chestertown had hired a professional architectural consultant who looked at the buildings, photographed them and assessed them to determine whether each was contributing or noncontributing in nature. The info was then put into a computer data base for a GIS system by students at Washington College, who also did three-dimensional CADD renderings of the buildings to provide visual reference.

Mr. Sokolich said Mr. Bollman had drafted the application to the State. The County Manager's office was informed of TCHPC agreement and, the County Manager will be required to sign off on the grant. Mr. Bollman is currently preparing the application for the grant which is due by the end of May, and plans to submit it in approximately two weeks. Mr. Sokolich said TCHPC need not take any action in regard to the application. When the application comes in, there will be a cover letter to be signed by the County Manager, who is approving this effort administratively. Mr. Sokolich added that it was not necessary in this case to present anything to the County Council. Mr. Sokolich said he emailed Corey Kegerise to ask what responsibilities, if any, Talbot County might have regarding implementation of this grant. Mr. Kegerise replied that the County would have no responsibility. Some concerns were discussed regarding how this grant application might affect the ability

of TCHPC to obtain grants for County projects in the near future. Mr. Sokolich said this grant application should not have any effect on future TCHPC applications for grants.

Mr. Sokolich also said he tried to figure out how TCHPC might “piggyback” survey updates of some of the County historic properties, such as the villages, but was unclear at this time about how that might work, and whether it would be at all possible.

- C. 925 PORT STREET (T-347) - Mr. Steven Hack asked whether there are any new developments regarding this project. Mr. Martin Sokolich said he called Priscilla Morris after talking with Parks and Recreation director Rick Towle about his concerns and the need to have some sort of board or committee to advocate rehabilitation of this building and raise some funds for the work. Mr. Sokolich said he asked Ms. Morris if she could think of ways to help with this project. She told Mr. Sokolich that she had some prospects in mind and she found someone who, if agreeable to Rick Towle, could be a tenant in the property. Mr. Sokolich summed up the status of this project by saying; “at this point, it is a matter of negotiations. If Rick Towle reaches a comfort level with these prospects, he may then be ready to proceed with the process of obtaining an HDO for 925 Port Street.”
- D. ESTABLISHING A PRELIMINARY LANDMARKS LIST – Mr. Martin Sokolich said he had nothing new to report regarding the Landmarks List project. Mr. Steven Hack asked if Mr. Sokolich was reducing the list into a more manageable one in preparation for doing the site surveys. Mr. Sokolich replied that he was not sure what the criteria might be for reducing it, as properties which no longer exist and properties within the limits of the incorporated towns had already been removed from the list.

Mr. Steven Hack said since it has been decided that TCHPC is capable of doing the survey work, the next step should be to establish the guidelines needed to assess these properties. He read aloud some examples of assessment criteria he had obtained which he felt are reasonable for use by the Commission for this purpose. He stressed that the decision for the Commissioners themselves to do the survey work needs to be discussed by all of its members. It was also discussed that regardless of how MHT merits the properties in their inventory, it should be the prerogative of TCHPC to decide which properties should be included on the Talbot County Landmarks List.

Mr. Steven Hack said that no decision could be made regarding the survey work until all or the majority of the Commissioners are present at a meeting. It was discussed that Mr. Eric Lowery has not attended a meeting for many consecutive months. Mrs. Marsha Kacher suggested sending a letter to Mr. Lowery suggesting that if he is no longer interested in being active, or cannot attend the meetings that he might

consider resigning so the County Council could appoint someone who can actively attend. Mr. Martin Sokolich said Mr. Lowery's term expires 1 July 2011. It was discussed that perhaps it would be better to notify the County Manager of the attendance issue. Mr. Steven Hack said he will send a letter to John Craig about this matter instead of sending a letter to Mr. Lowery. In summation of this topic, Mr. Hack said TCHPC can go no further with its discussion of the survey work until all of the Commissioners are in attendance.

- E. MILLER'S HOUSE IN WYE MILLS (T-70) – Mr. Ward Bucher was not present to give a report; therefore, this topic was not discussed at this time.

III. NEW BUSINESS

- A. SITE VISITS – On 18 April 2011, Mrs. Marsha Kacher, Ms. Alice Marie Gravely and Mr. Robert Amdur performed an annual site inspection at Webley (T-214). Mrs. Kacher said they spoke with the caretaker since the owners were not present. Mr. Amdur mentioned that it appeared that the brick had been painted at some point and was wearing away. He asked if it is acceptable, or if it should be repainted. It was discussed that the paint had been applied years ago and it is acceptable to allow it to wear off.

Mr. Steven Hack asked if anyone else might be interested in taking over the task of scheduling the site visits and sending out the letter to the owners afterward. He explained the procedures for arranging the site visits and displayed a copy of the typical letter to the owners.

IV. OPEN FLOOR

- A. TCHPC EDUCATION: A CLG REQUIREMENT – Mr. Steven Hack said he has not been successful in locating online courses that could be credited toward the educational requirement for the Commissioners. He checked the National Park Service website, and elsewhere online, but could not find any courses with exams or quizzes that might qualify for credit. Mr. Martin Sokolich suggested talking to someone at MHT and Preservation Maryland to find out what online courses might be available for that purpose. Local seminars and conferences were also discussed as options. Mr. Martin Sokolich said there should be enough money left in the budget for 2011 to cover the educational course fees. The process for reimbursement of educational costs was briefly explained to the Commissioners by Mr. Sokolich.
- B. BUDGET – Mr. Steven Hack received a letter stating the TCHPC budget for 2012 had been cut approximately in half, and he was not surprised, considering the current economy.

NEXT SITE VISIT - The next site visit will be at Rich Neck Manor (T-211) on Monday, 16 May. Those attending shall meet in the Easton Acme parking lot at 9:15 AM.

NEXT MEETING: Monday, 6 June 2011 at 3:00 pm in Conference Room One in the Talbot County Office Building at 215 Bay Street in Easton.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED.

12 May 2011